

MASTER OF
KUNG FU™

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MARVEL® COMICS GROUP



THE HANDS OF SHANG-CHI, MASTER OF KUNG FU™

**THIS ISSUE:
SHANG-CHI'S
SHOWDOWN
WITH WAR-YORE,
THE MURDER
MASTER!**



**BEHOLD
THE
FINAL
MASK!**

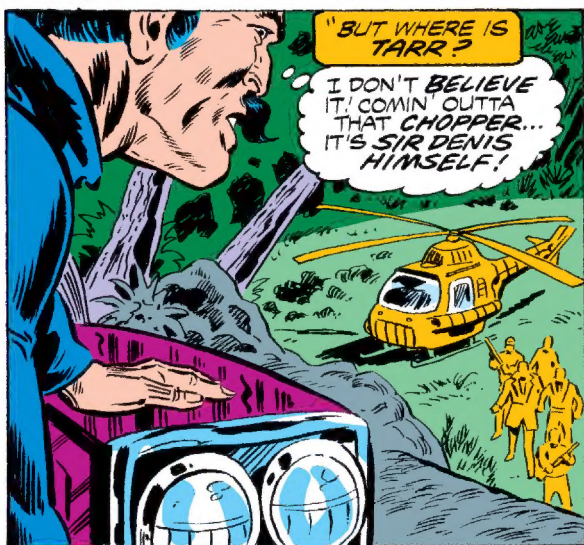
"Call me Shang-Chi, as my **father** did, when he raised me and molded my mind and my body in the vacuum of his Honan, China retreat. I learned many things from my father. Since then, I have learned that my father is **Dr. Fu Manchu**, the most insidiously evil man on earth...and that to **honor** him would bring nothing but **dishonor** to the spirit of my **name**.

Stan Lee PRESENTS: **MASTER OF KUNG FU!**™

Featuring supporting characters created by SAX ROHMER

D. MOENCH • J. CRAIG • J. TARTAG • G. ROUSSOS • COSTANZA & ROSEN • A. GOODWIN
WRITER ARTIST INKER COLORIST LETTERERS EDITOR







SEE HERE! I DON'T KNOW WHAT IN BLAZES IS GOING ON, BUT I DON'T LIKE IT ONE BIT!

FIRST I'M DRAGGED OUT HERE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT ON SOME VAGUE, MYSTERIOUS BUSINESS -- AND NOW I FIND THIS!



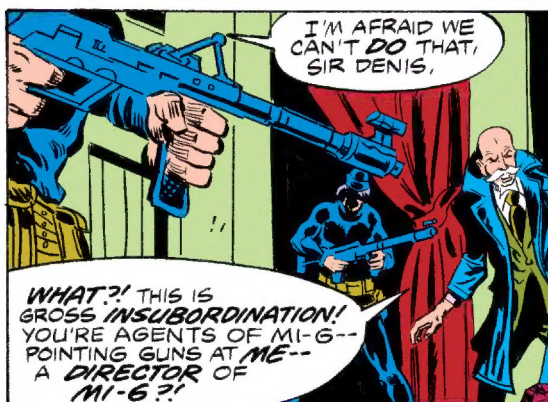
BUT--BUT, SIR DENIS... WE WERE LED TO BELIEVE THAT YOU WERE--



THAT I WAS WHAT?!

THIS HAS GONE TOO FAR. RELEASE THAT GIRL-- NOW!

AT ONCE! DO YOU HEAR ME?!



I'M AFRAID WE CAN'T DO THAT, SIR DENIS,

WHAT?! THIS IS GROSS INSUBORDINATION! YOU'RE AGENTS OF MI-6-- POINTING GUNS AT ME-- A DIRECTOR OF MI-6?!



THE SITUATION IS CONSIDERABLY MORE COMPLEX THAN ANYONE HERE SUSPECTS, SIR DENIS.



YOU SEE, OUR ORDERS ORIGINATED FROM A POSITION HIGHER THAN YOURS.

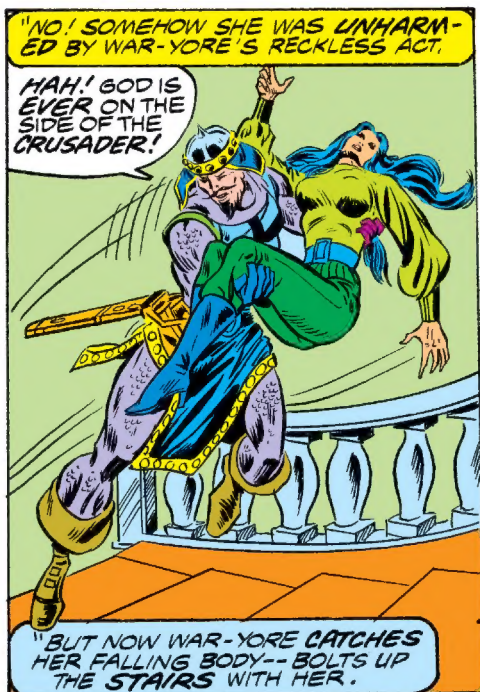
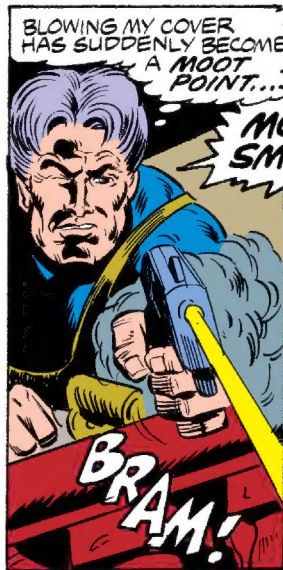
HAH! I KNEW SIR DENIS HAD TO BE CLEAN...AND BAD BACK OR NOT...

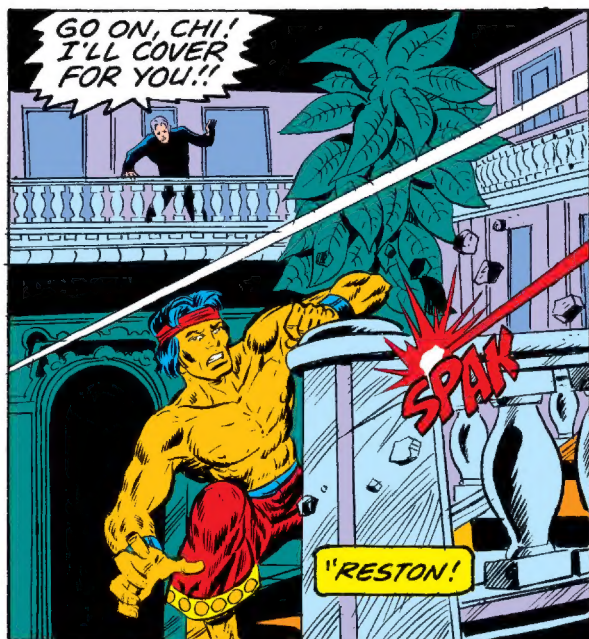


BRAM!

GET DOWN, SIR DENIS!!

"TARR! HE APPEARS WITHOUT WARNING, FIRING WITHOUT THOUGHT FOR LEIKO--







NO!! THEY ESCAPED!
IF WORD OF ALL THIS
LEAKS OUT,
THEY'LL--



YOU PATHETIC
FOOL. WHY DID
YOU HAVE TO
FORCE ME
TO--



BRAM

--KILL
US.



"THE CASTLE IS
TOO LARGE. WHERE,
IN ALL ITS VAST
VOLUME--

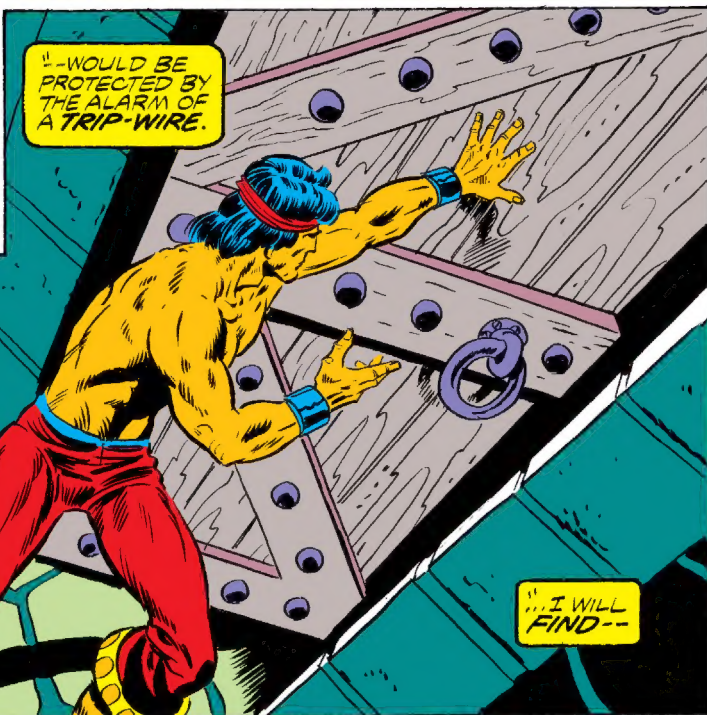
"A
WIRE--?



"YES.



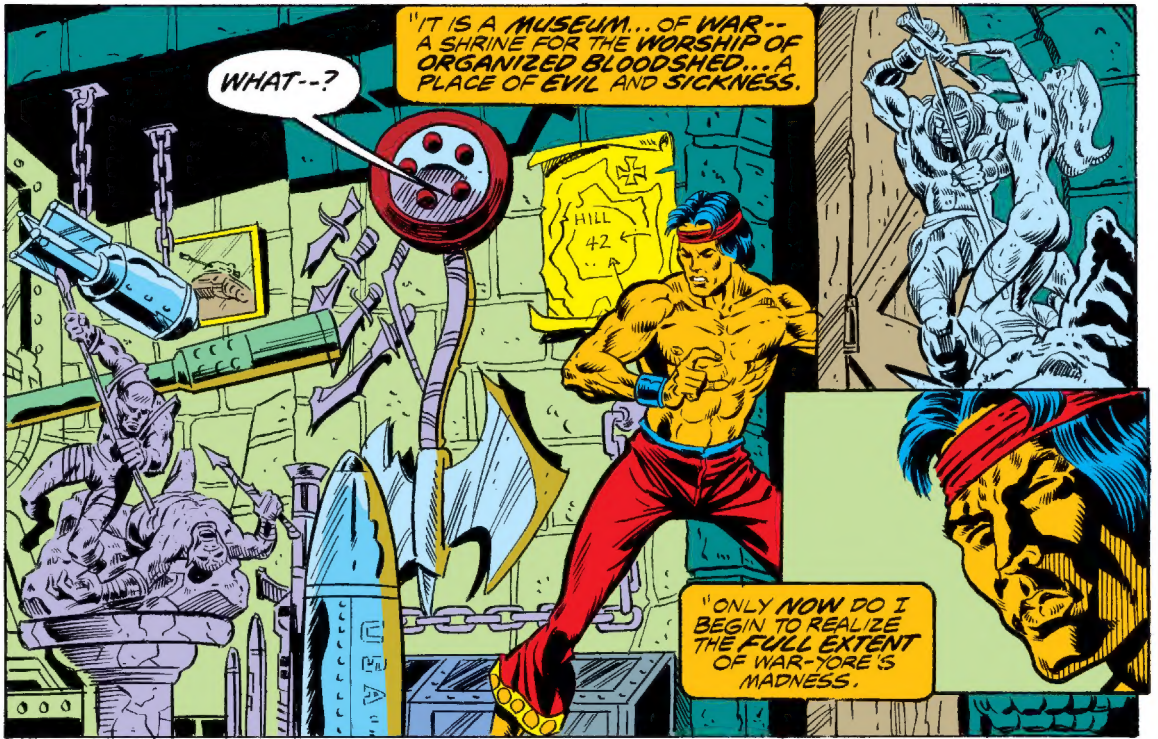
"THIS WAY... FOR,
ONLY SOMETHING
IMPORTANT--

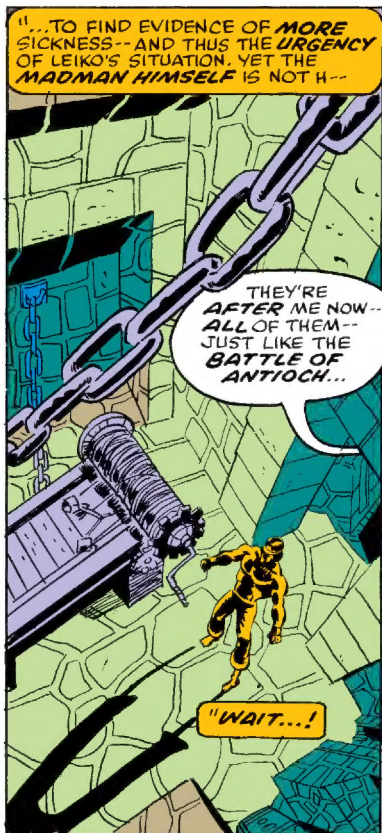


"--WOULD BE
PROTECTED BY
THE ALARM OF
A TRIP-WIRE.

"THUS,
PERHAPS
IN HERE...

"I WILL
FIND--





"...TO FIND EVIDENCE OF *MORE* SICKNESS--AND THUS THE *URGENCY* OF LEIKO'S SITUATION. YET THE *MADMAN HIMSELF* IS NOT H--

THEY'RE AFTER ME NOW--
ALL OF THEM--
JUST LIKE THE
BATTLE OF
ANTIOCH...

"WAIT...!"



... BUT I'LL
FOOL THEM--
WE'LL ALL FOOL
THEM! AFTER ALL,
WE'RE THE *GREAT-
EST WARRIORS*
HISTORY HAS
KNOWN!

HOW
CAN THEY
POSSIBLY
DEFEAT
US?



"YES-- IT *IS* WAR-YORE--APPROACH-
ING *THIS CHAMBER*. BUT UNTIL
LEIKO IS *SAFE*--



-- I MUST
NOT LET
HIM *SEE*
ME.

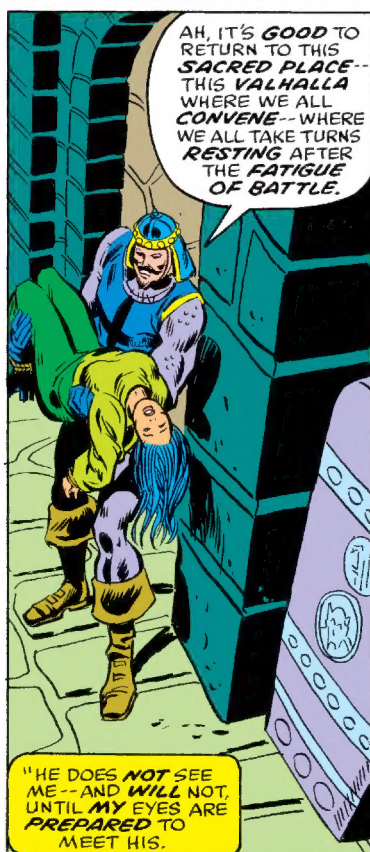
SPAKT

PRAK

ROK

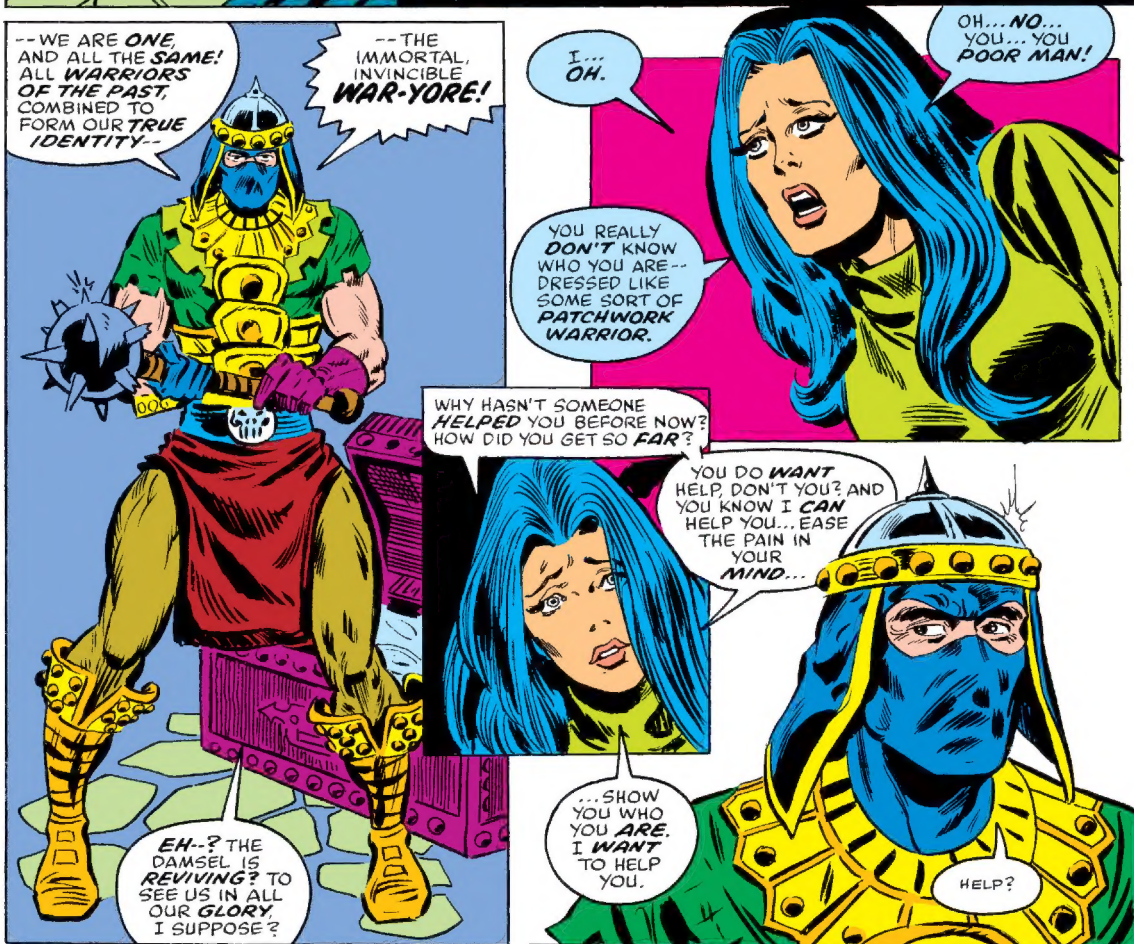


WHY, TOGETHER WE'VE
STAINED THE PAGES OF
HISTORY *CRIMSON*--
WRITTEN THE GLORIOUS
PAST IN *FLAMING
LETTERS OF BLOOD!*



AH, IT'S *GOOD*
TO RETURN TO THIS
SACRED PLACE--
THIS *VALHALLA*
WHERE WE ALL
CONVENE--WHERE
WE ALL TAKE TURNS
RESTING AFTER
THE *FATIGUE*
OF BATTLE.

"HE DOES *NOT* SEE
ME--AND *WILL NOT*,
UNTIL *MY EYES* ARE
PREPARED TO
MEET HIS.





YES...

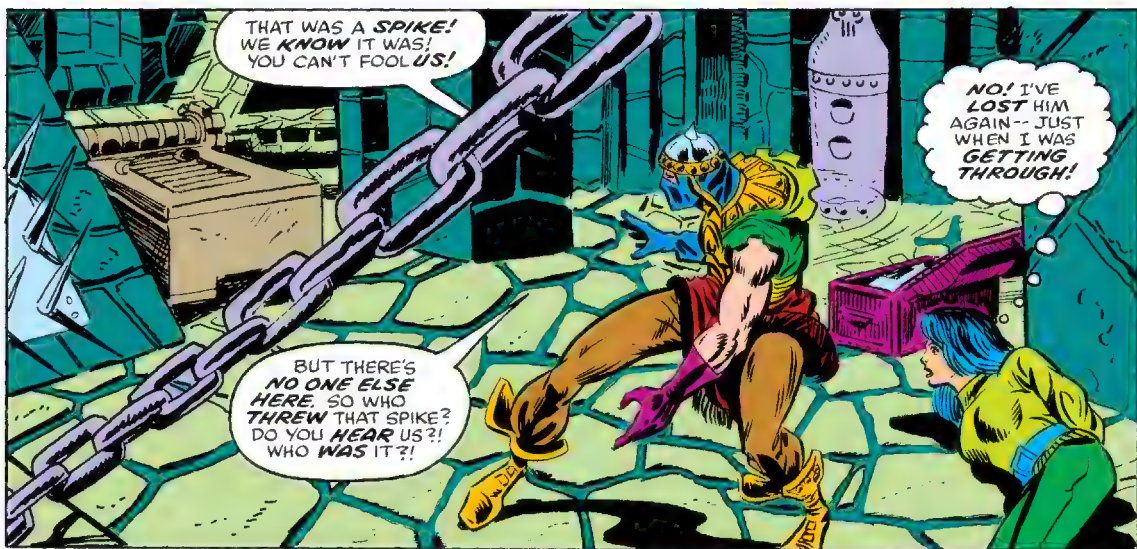
...THAT *WOULD* BE EVER SO NICE... TO HAVE *HELP*. I REALLY *DON'T* CARE FOR MYSELF, YOU KNOW-- FOR *ANY* OF MY SELVES--AND I DON'T REALLY WANT TO *BE* LIKE THIS.

"HE RESPONDS TO HER *SYMPATHY*--*IMPLORING* HER. BUT WHAT IF HIS PERSONALITY SHOULD *CHANGE* AGAIN, BECOMING *VIOLENT*, AND HIS HANDS *CLOSE ON HER THROAT*--INSTEAD OF *CUPPING* HER FACE?"



"I CANNOT RISK THE *POSSIBILITY*."

WHAT..?!



THAT WAS A *SPIKE*! WE *KNOW* IT WAS! YOU CAN'T FOOL US!

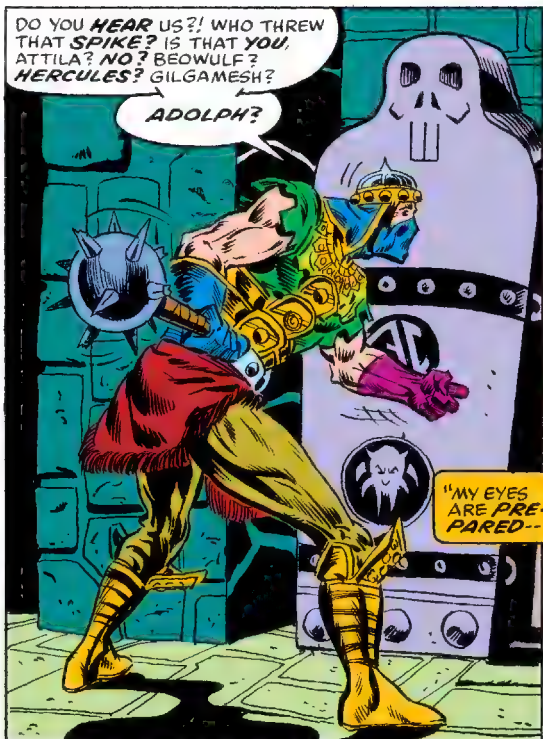
NO! I'VE LOST HIM AGAIN-- JUST WHEN I WAS GETTING THROUGH!

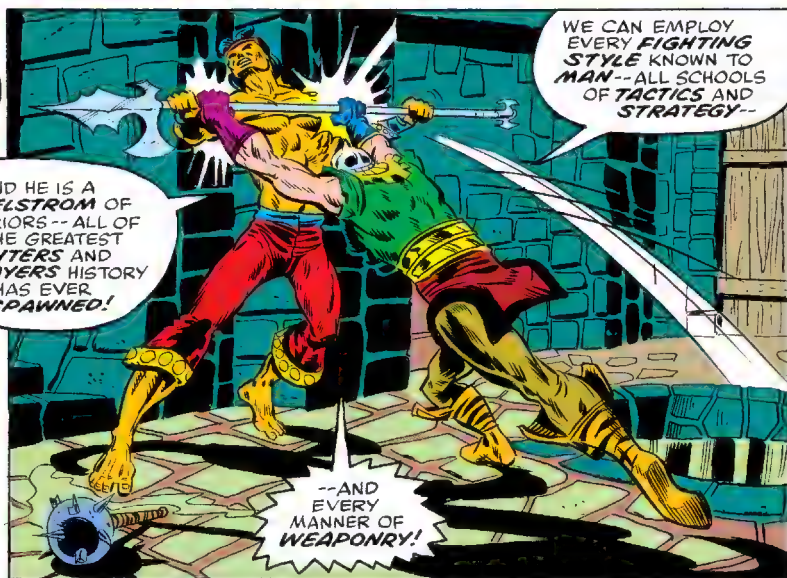
BUT THERE'S *NO ONE ELSE* HERE, SO WHO *THREW* THAT SPIKE? DO YOU *HEAR* US?! WHO *WAS* IT?!

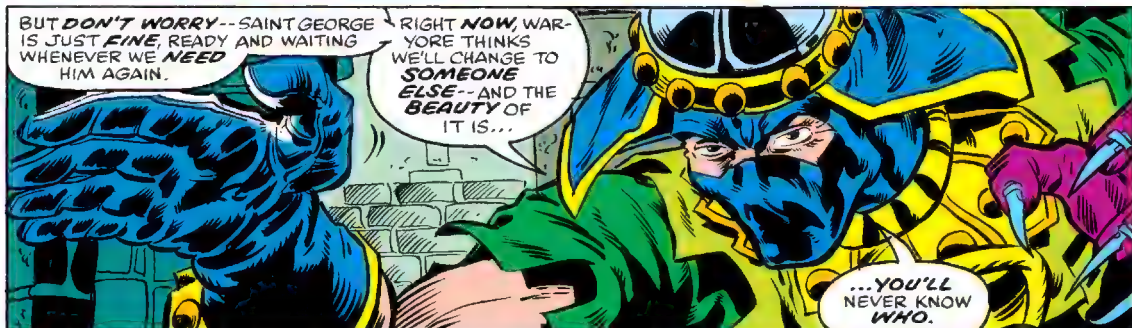


--ABOUT *TIME* THEY GOT HERE. BLOODY *WORLD WAR THREE* COULD'VE BEEN FOUGHT AND *LOST* IN THE *TIME* THEY TOOK.

WELL, COME ON, SIR DENIS-- WE'D BETTER HURRY UP AND FILL THE SPEEDSTERS *IN*. RESTON'S PROBABLY GETTIN' TIRED OF HOLDIN' HIS *GUN*.







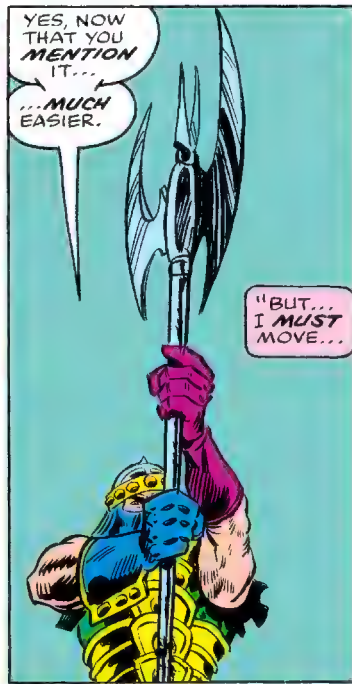


"BREATH... GONE... CANNOT... MOVE.

HEE-HEE-HYEE!



THIS WAS EASIER THAN WE THOUGHT, WASN'T IT?



YES, NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT...
...MUCH EASIER.

"BUT... I MUST MOVE..."



-- TOOK YOU MI-6 BOZOS LONG ENOUGH, BUT ONCE YOU GOT HERE YOU WEREN'T BAD.

NICE MOP-UP.

THANK YOU, MR. TARR.

AND YOU-- I SAW THAT EYEBALL MOVE.

KNOCK IT OFF.

Y-YES, SIR, I WON'T MOVE-- HONEST.



AWRIGHT, RESTON-- GUESS THIS PRETTY MUCH FREES YOU UP.

YOU CAN TAKE AFTER OUR FRIEND ERIC SLAUGHTER NOW--

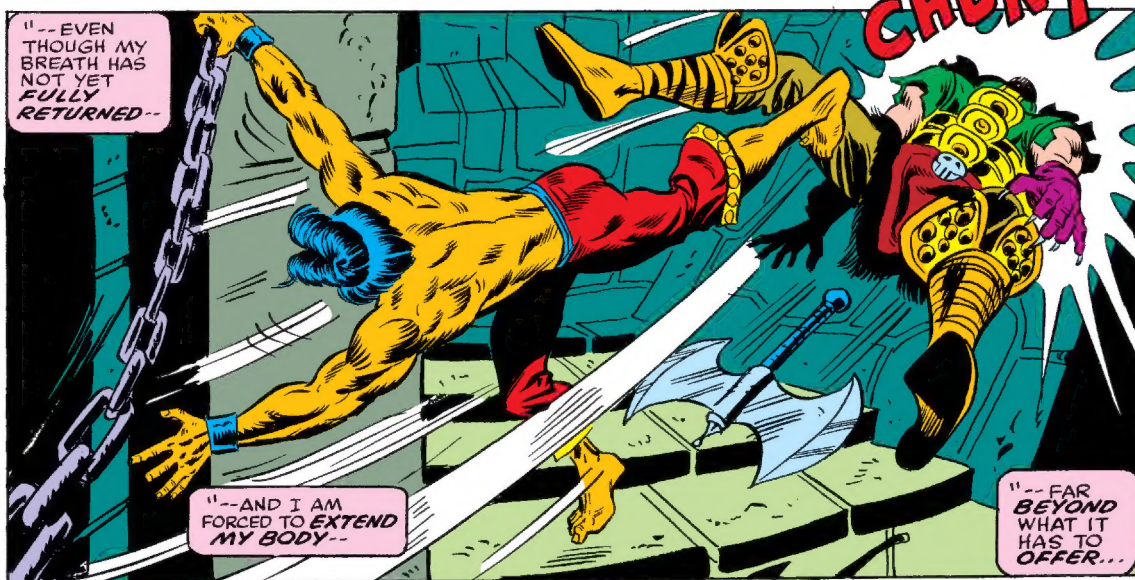
-- AN GIVE 'IM ONE FOR ME--

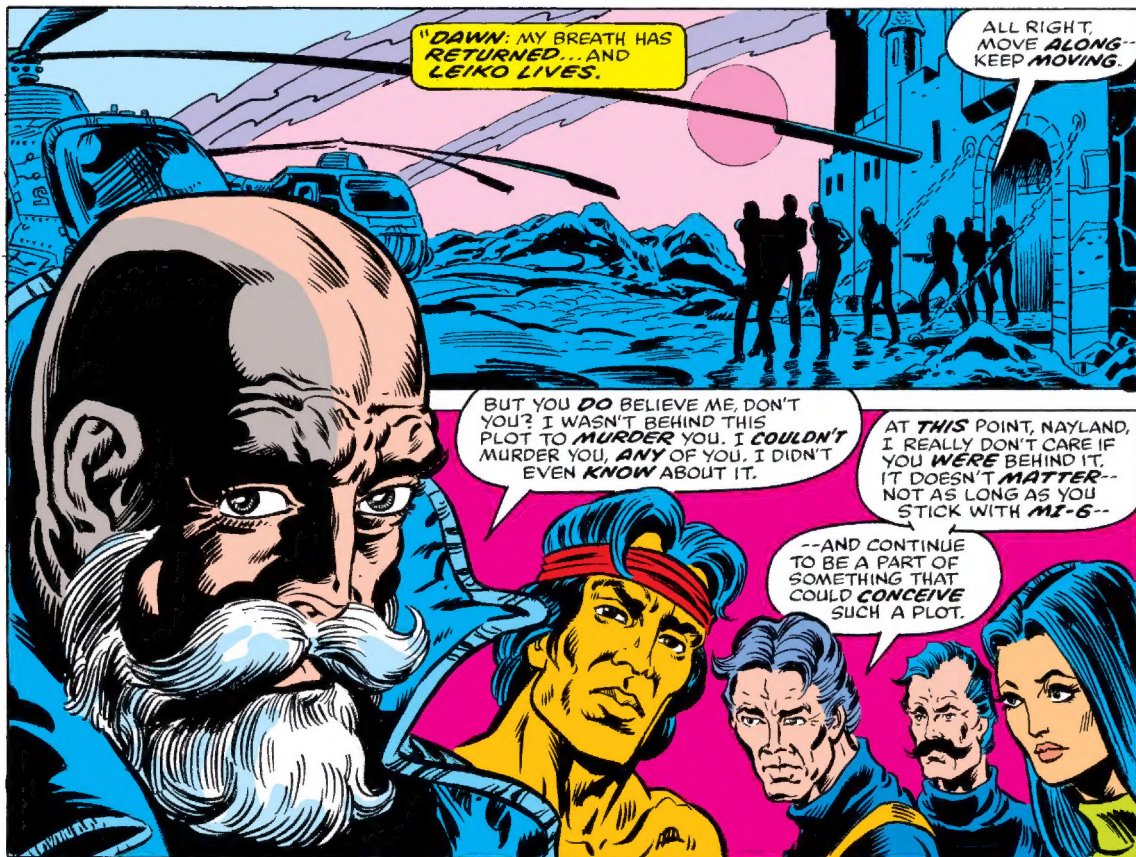


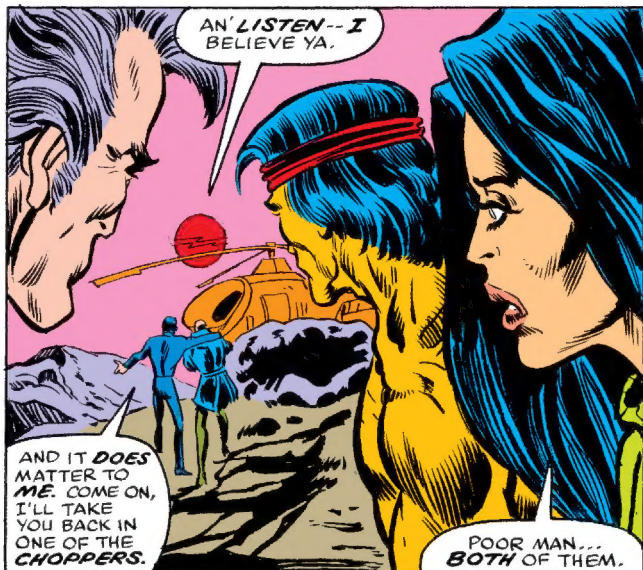
BEEN SO LONG-- NOT KNOWING WHAT'S BEEN GOING ON UP THERE! IF LEIKO'S ALREADY DEAD...

-- THE KIND I'D GIVE 'IM MYSELF, IF MY BLOODY BACK WOULD COOPERATE.

"...MUST MOVE...AT LEAST MY **ARMS!**"







**NEXT
ISSUE:**

THE MOST OFFBEAT
TALE-- BAR NONE--
IN THE ENTIRE
HISTORY OF MOKE..

**THE
PHOENIX
GAMBIT**

MISSIVES^{TO} THE MASTER!

9/6 MARVEL COMICS GROUP, 575 MADISON AVE. N.Y.C. 10022

This time, a sampling of your initial reactions to MASTER OF KUNG FU's new penciler, that tremendous Torontoan Jim Craig. . .

Dear Doug & Jim,

Whoosh. . .whatta comic! #54 was great. While Shang-Chi seems to have put on a little weight, the art was generally good and the action shots, in particular, were excellent. I also liked the layouts—very imaginative.

The story, of course, was superb. Too bad we have to wait for a future issue before learning where Leiko is, though. But suspense is always like that: pleasurable because it's so painful.

You know, I really had a feeling that the record Shang-Chi selected would be Fleetwood Mac, and I'm glad you've given Chi such good taste in Western music.

Well, Doug and Jim, keep up the good work, because I'm counting on you. . .

James C. LeRoy

P.O. Box 723

Centre Harbor, N.H. 03226

Dear Doug,

I'm glad to hear that you, Paul Gulacy, and MASTER OF KUNG FU itself did so well in those awards. Until a year or so ago, I'd always believed MOKF to be one of the many also-rans. But after reading "Cat" and "Fight Without Pity," I've had to grudgingly admit that it's one of the best titles to appear since a certain Cimmerian copped his own book seven years ago.

As for the last half-dozen issues, MOKF has consistently upheld a high standard of quality previously equalled only by Jim Starlin's WARLOCK and The McGregor/Russell WAR OF THE WORLDS, both of which were killed at their zeniths. Why is it that so very few of the "thinking man's comics" (SILVER SURFER, WARLOCK, WAR OF THE WORLDS, McGregor's BLACK PANTHER, MAN-THING and several others) manage to succeed on a commercial level? I suppose we'll never know, but thank God for MASTER OF KUNG FU. With stories like "The Affair of the Agent Who Died," "The Dreamslayer," and "The Story of War-Yore," I'll be buying this book till the day I die—or until the day I see that little yellow box telling me of its demise, which is when I cut *all* my comics buying by 75% in sheer protest.

Thanks for the slice of comic relief, courtesy of Rufus T. Hackstaber and Quigley J. Warmflash; after all the seriousness of the Fu Manchu opus, something in a lighter vein was most welcome.

The latest issue—"The Story of War-Yore"—was extremely good, returning us to the realm of mood and intensity we've come to expect. While I certainly regret Paul Gulacy's departure from the strip, Jim Craig surprised me—and favorably so. If he keeps improving. . .

Finally, the sequence with Shang-Chi and the Fleetwood Mac album (fine music, incidentally) was a nice touch and added a good deal of realism to an already highly realistic series.

Bill Sundling

309 Wis. Ave.

Gladstone, Michigan 49837

Doug heartily agrees with your assessment of Fleetwood Mac, Bill, and is even now thriving on the group's latest release, "Rumours," claiming it's the first time he's been this excited about music since the Beatles, Who, Hendrix, and Traffic. Indeed, the formerly Devil-May-Care lad has been

muttering that ROCKY, Fleetwood Mac, and the Coming of Spring are the only things that have kept him going these past few months. Thank Hieronymus for creativity and inspiration in all its forms. . .

As for Jim Craig, he's too busy for anything but the monumental task of grappling with a new reality. It's called: A Monthly Schedule.

Dear Doug and Jim,

I was certainly surprised, and even hurt, when Paul Gulacy left MASTER OF KUNG FU. Indeed, I was filled with apprehension and seriously doubted that the gigantic shoes left by Paul could be filled by anyone—even someone from the Marvel Bullpen. It seemed to me that the book's future was in grave jeopardy.

So you can imagine my surprise when I first saw Jim Craig's art. It was excellent. The mood captured the same feeling that Paul had long since established for this series—mysterious, yet with the emotions of each individual character coming through strongly, each expressing himself/herself in identifiable terms. My greatest hopes have been surpassed. Jim's art is fantastic, so please don't lose him.

The writing, as usual, was up to its own self-set goal. I especially appreciate the new directions along which the story-line seems to be moving. After the Fu Manchu saga, I would not have believed that a tale as excellent as "The Story of War-Yore" could be produced. Yet, as with Jim Craig's art, Doug's writing has also been a pleasant surprise—although being surprised by Doug is not so surprising anymore; I'm beginning to expect it. The villain War-Yore was developed perfectly, and the stage has been set for even better possibilities.

It seems the wonders of MASTER OF KUNG FU never cease.

Tom Likens

R.R. #1 Box 306

Chrisney, Ind. 47611

Nor does the delight of receiving letters like yours. Sorry to liken matters in that way, Tom, but at the moment we're a little too weak to resist. . .

Dear Doug and Jim,

MOKF #54 was more than I ever could've asked for. As usual, the story was great, but it's the art I'd really like to comment on. You see, I was afraid MOKF would go straight downhill after Paul left (artwise, that is), but you miracle-workers at Marvel have just proved me wrong again. Jim Craig's artwork comes closer to capturing the established style of MOKF than any other artist, excluding Paul, could hope to reach. I still suspect that Gulacy will remain at the top of my all-time favorite artists, but Jim Craig will not be far behind.

Make Mine MASTER OF KUNG FU!

Brad Scudder

2137 N. 159th

Seattle, Washington 98133

Jim and Paul both thank you, Brad, and since Doug noticed that you live in Seattle he was wondering if you happened to see Godzilla passing through your neighborhood not too long ago. Seems he's temporarily lost track of the Jolly Green Gi—er, big fellow.

NEXT ISSUE: Doug teams up with Mike Zeck for the first half of a stunningly special two-parter. And it really is a mind-blower, take it from us (one that Steranko fans particularly, will not want to miss), really. Jim Craig will be working ahead in the meantime, launching yet another new direction for our peripatetic cast of characters, and striving in general to eliminate any further continuity upheavels. Eternal optimists that we are, we must repeat again: The best is yet to come.

Until it gets here. . .be good.